



Gulf Region District
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Iraq



Orientation Guide

Building Strong
for the future
of Iraq

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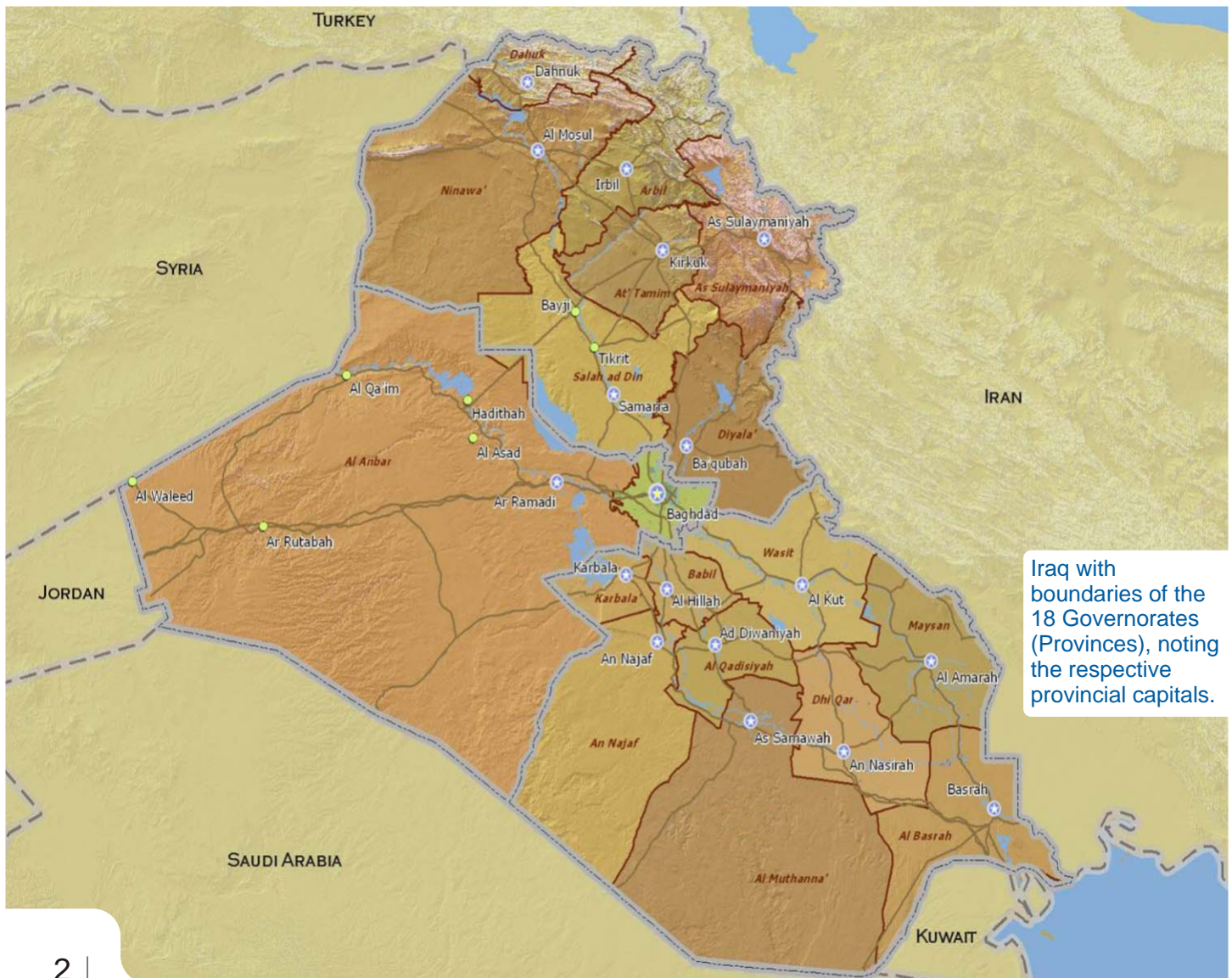
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REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
GULF REGION DISTRICT
ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
APO AE 09342



CETAG

MEMORANDUM FOR Gulf Region District New Employees

SUBJECT: Commander's Welcome Letter

1. Welcome to the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Gulf Region District (GRD). We are extremely proud of our District and the work we are doing for Coalition Forces and the nation of Iraq. Your assignment at GRD will provide you with new opportunities for success. We look forward to your arrival!

2. Our mission at GRD is to deliver quality projects, products, and services in support of Iraq, and the Coalition Forces, in a safe and timely manner. The following pages tell you a little bit about the particulars of where, who, what and how we go about our mission.

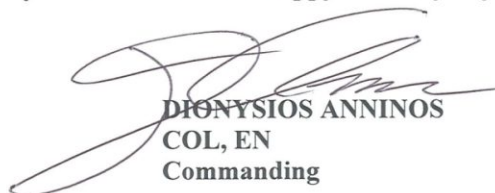
3. To ease your transition, I encourage you to visit the Gulf Region District site at:
<http://www.grd.usace.army.mil>

Log on to GRD Facebook and become a fan at:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/US-Army-Corps-of-Engineers-Gulf-Region-District/144982302181?ref=ts>

The Transatlantic Programs Division (TAD) site for deployment information is:
<http://www.tam.usace.army.mil/UDC>

4. We look forward to your arrival and are happy to have you join our team!



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COL, EN
Commanding

Where the Mission Is?

A Brief History

The Where of Gulf Region District is easy . . . Iraq. Any country is not, however, defined by location alone. In the case of Iraq, it is a complex mix of tribal affiliations and religious persuasions, all interactive. Gulf Region District exists to assist in this nation's reconstruction and to deliver to the Coalition Forces the support they require. Here's how we got to where we are today.

Months before the regime of Saddam Hussein fell in 2003, Army Engineers, civilian and military, were on the ground, first in Kuwait and then in Iraq, addressing engineering challenges. Various stateside U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) division and district employees formed initial task force teams in oil and electricity, as well as forward engineering support teams, operating throughout the entire theater, to assess projects, develop courses of action, and initiate contracts during the early days of reconstruction.

The success of the USACE task force teams were crucial in efforts to secure a new and reliable government as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom. On January 25, 2004, these individual engineering efforts were brought under one command with the formation of the Gulf Region Division (GRD).

In September of 2009, the Gulf Region Division was inactivated as part of the drawdown leaving the Gulf Region District in its place. Headquartered at Camp Liberty, just west of downtown Baghdad, Gulf Region District delivers quality projects, and services in support of Iraq, and Coalition Forces, in a safe and timely manner.





Iraqi police officers show off their new quarters at a police station built by the Gulf Region District near Baqubah.

The focus of United States policy in Iraq remains on helping the Iraqi people build a constitutional, representative government that respects the rights of all Iraqis and has security forces capable of maintaining order and preventing the country from becoming a safe haven for terrorists and foreign fighters. The ultimate goal is an Iraq that is peaceful, united, stable, democratic, and secure, with institutions capable of providing just governance and security for all Iraqis and is an ally in the war against terror.

The Army Corps of Engineers in Iraq and its partners (Iraqi ministries, Department of State, others) continue to make significant progress in rebuilding and improving the country's infrastructure and facilities. As of Sept. 2009, the Army Corps of Engineers and more than 40,000 Iraqis have completed more than 4,600 projects, valued at \$7.3 billion.

The Corps is building a sustainable Iraq by employing Iraqis and training them to maintain construction projects long after completion. More than 20,000 Iraqis are currently engaged and actively working on the reconstruction effort.



How You Get to the Gulf Region District

Travel Information

USACE Deployment Center (UDC)

OK, you are ready to begin your journey to work at the Gulf Region District. Now, your preparation for deployment begins in earnest. Upon arrival at UDC, near Winchester, Va., you will attend a series of deployment preparation classes, plus receive a clothing and material issue for your tour of duty. The USACE Deployment Center (UDC) sets the deployment schedule, arranges transportation for your departure to Kuwait, and provides notification to the USACE Kuwait staff of your arrival information.



Kuwait International Airport

Personnel arriving in Kuwait should proceed through customs, get your bags and head through the frosted glass doors. You will find the USACE Liaison Officer (LNO), a member of the Reception Staging and Onward Integration (RSOI) team holding a sign with a red castle. RSOI staff generally stand off to the left side as personnel depart from the Customs Receiving area.

The RSOI LNO assists new arrivals to ensure transportation to Kuwait's nearby Ali Al Salem (AAS) Air Base by the most efficient method available. From Kuwait Airport, you travel for a 45-minute ride to the U.S. military

side of AAS, and prepare for your flight to Iraq.

While you are at Ali Al Salem Air Base, the RSOI LNOs assist with: (a) issue of your Individual Body Armor (IBA), civilian and military, as required; (b) billeting assignment and bedding for your stay in Kuwait (c) arrangements for a military flight to Iraq.

Personnel deploying from CONUS need to keep the following in mind. You may expect to remain in a tent environment while in Kuwait for up to 72 hours. Tents are equipped with 10-12 beds and are fully air conditioned and heated. Meals are served at the military Dining Facility (DFAC) at no cost, but you must have your CAC card for admission.

There are several fast-food chains on the base that take U.S. currency. Internet facilities and telephones are available. Self-help washers and dryers are there for your use, as well as a small military exchange on AAS Air Base. Prior to departing AAS for Iraq, all military personnel must be in duty uniform.

The RSOI team manifests you for a follow-on flight to Baghdad International Airport (BIAP) and advises you of flight requirements, such as reporting time for flight manifest call and appropriate clothing to wear. Upon arrival at the Baghdad military-side of the airport (Sather Air Force Base), the Camp Liberty RSOI team will greet you and transport you to Gulf Region District Headquarters. Welcome!!



Gulf Region District
HQ billeting at Camp
Wolfe, Victory Base
Complex, Baghdad



Living and eating

How You Live and Eat

When you arrive at Gulf Region District HQ on Camp Wolfe at Victory Base Complex (VBC) near Baghdad for inprocessing, you will be assigned a permanent room if your work is on Camp Wolfe, or billeted temporarily until your movement is arranged to one of the other Gulf Region District sites. Billeting accommodations vary from location to location. At one location you might be living in a two-story “college-dormitory” type building, and, at others, in housing units similar to a trailer. The dormitory style buildings have a communal bathroom on the living story with individual privacy doors for showers and commodes. The trailers have two bedrooms with a shared bathroom in between the rooms.

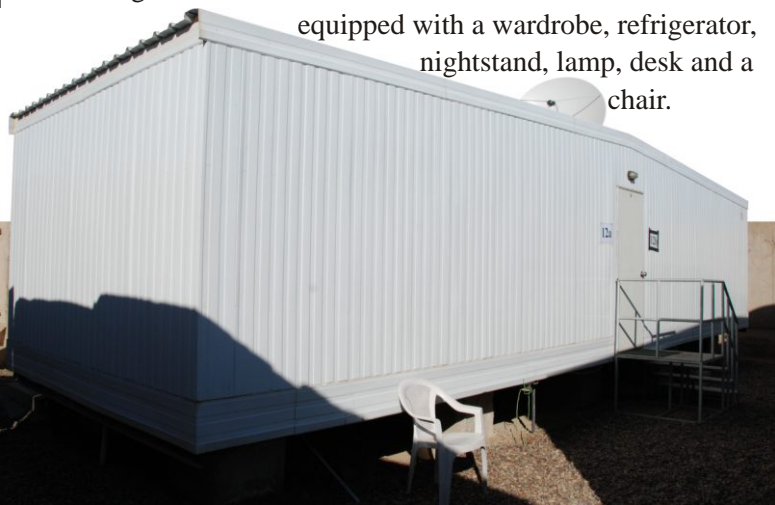
All rooms are equipped with room thermostats for air conditioning and heat. Most Gulf Region District billeting rooms have a TV, DVD player, Internet hookup and receive Armed Forces Network (AFN) television stations along with other satellite channels. All rooms come equipped with a wardrobe, refrigerator, nightstand, lamp, desk and a chair.



Living space at Gulf Region District



Gulf Region District HQ dormitory
bathroom and shower area



Telephone and Mailing Procedures

Bring a telephone calling card with you to make personal calls. Employees may make personal use of telephone and communications services during authorized work breaks (duty day is 0730-1800) or during off-duty time, limited to 15 minutes in the duty day and 30 minutes or less after duty hours. In no case may any cost be incurred to the US Government for other than official business.

You may mail up to 13 ounces free, but you must write "Free Mail" on the envelope in place of postage. For larger items or boxes, there are several post offices located on Victory Base Complex (GRD HQ) and at least one post office at every other GRD Office location. Normally, mail takes 10-12 days to arrive at its destination. DHL or FedEx are available in country, but are very expensive.



Gyms, MWRs

Keep fit

Exercise options are at every Gulf Region District area with more than \$70,000 in new equipment at various locations. In addition, all the military installations have exercise programs and Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) classes to help keep you fit.



Troop Medical Clinics (TMCs)

The TMCs are military medical facilities for all deployed personnel, military and civilian. They are staffed by trained Medical Corps Servicemembers. Hours are established for the individual locations for Sick Call (usually early morning and early afternoon) and for other appointments such as vaccinations. Services include: emergencies, out patient visits, and prescription refills. Be sure to bring a supply of prescription medicines you are currently taking (a six-month supply is the required minimum).

Emergencies (life, limb or eyesight) are seen 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. Only emergency dental care, however, is available in theater.

Gulf Region District

Policies and FAQs

Command Policies

Command policies in the form of Commander's Memoranda are clearly defined and readily available to all staff (once you are in Iraq) on the GRD SharePoint. These memoranda are posted on District bulletin boards as well.

Frequently Asked Questions & Answers

Travel and Security

Do I need a passport?

A passport is required for civilians and recommended for military deployment (either an official or a tourist passport).

How will I travel?

Travel to Kuwait is by commercial air. Travel from Kuwait is by military aircraft to Baghdad. While in Iraq, travel may be by convoy in armored military or armored civilian security contractor vehicles, or by air in military planes and helicopters. Your safety is carefully guarded and all precautions made to ensure your safe travel in theater.

Will I carry a Weapon?

Yes for military. No for civilians. The security of all facilities where you work and live is of the utmost concern and is provided at all times. A professional security force of USACE contractors will accompany you whenever you are traveling outside a compound or base. Traveling to a project site is a well-coordinated movement by each Gulf Region District office.

Professional Aegis Defence Services Security Escort Teams (SETs) protect Gulf Region District staff as they travel in Iraq. Each District office and living location is on a secure military installation guarded by trained military and civilian forces responsible for base security.



FAQs & As (cont.)

Quality of Life

How do I do my laundry?

Free laundry facilities are provided on-site. In the billeting area, there are self-service washers and dryers. On the installations, there are free drop-off laundry services, usually with a two to four day turnaround. Be sure to mark your clothing if you choose the drop-off service.

Where will I eat?

There are no-cost, well-run, dining facilities (DFACs) at every Gulf Region District location. Meal times vary, but usually there are four meals served each day (including a midnight meal). Fast food vendors such as Pizza Hut, Burger King, Taco Bell, Subway, Seattle's Best Coffee (plus others) are also available at most locations.

What is the voltage in Iraq?

Electricity is 220 volts/50 cycles everywhere in Iraq, even on military installations. If you bring an electrical appliance from the US, bring a plug converter or look for dual voltage items to purchase and bring with you. Electronic devices that have input voltage on their transformers reading AC 100-240 volts and 50/60 Hz will work without any problems. Batteries and stand-alone transformers are readily available from the military exchange and installation vendors. Approved and safe power strips are issued to incoming personnel at the Gulf Region District Newcomers Orientation.

How can I purchase souvenirs?

All the installations have approved vendor-run shops where you may purchase a variety of souvenirs, rugs, custom-made clothing for men and women (or even children), jewelry and unique gifts to send home. All the shops take U.S. dollars and most take U.S. credit cards for payment.

Are there religious services on the installations?

Yes, the military chaplains conduct services at each of the Gulf Region District locations. Service times vary from place to place.

What about Morale Welfare Recreation (MWR) activities?

An assortment of activities, including Salsa Night, Karaoke, a variety of sports and running events, as well as Ping-Pong championships and Poker competitions are available for your off-duty time.

Communication

How long does it take to receive or send a letter or package?

Depending on the location, it takes about ten days to two weeks for mail to arrive from the U.S. Having a current and correct address is the key to receiving your mail. Generally, you should wait until you arrive at Gulf Region District and your work assignment is final before mailing packages. Your sponsor is best able to provide an address for mailing packages prior to your arrival. Check with your assigned sponsor.

Will I have e-mail access?

Yes. Once you get to your assigned work area, you will likely have daily access. You will be able to send and receive e-mail from family and friends.

Will my personal cell phone work in Iraq?

Most do not. Some U.S. based cell phone providers offer international service, but it is usually very expensive.

How can I make a call home from Iraq?

Purchase or bring a telephone calling card. These cards are also sold in the military exchanges and may be "recharged" over the phone by using a credit card. There is no charge for official calls or to U.S. toll-free numbers (800, 877, 866, etc.).

A 110/220V transformer



Washing machines at a free laundry facility.